

Kentucky Resources to Improve Students' Readiness for Postsecondary Education

- The Kentucky Board of Education voted to raise the state's minimum **High School Graduation Requirements**. These new requirements, which were endorsed by the State P-16 Council, include algebra I, geometry, algebra II, and mathematics every year. In the sciences, schools will be required to provide students with lab-based or inquiry-based learning experiences. While these requirements do not go into effect until 2012, one way you can help your students is to implement these new, more rigorous requirements for all students and eliminate general track studies from the curriculum.
- The **Individual Learning Plan** should guide the student's course of study and extracurricular activities throughout the middle and high school years, ensuring that each student receives individualized services and support. The name of the plan has been changed from "Individual Graduation Plan" to emphasize its role in preparing the student for a successful transition to college and work. In 2006, the plan will be available to all middle and high schools as a Web-enabled resource integrated with the GoHigher Web site (see below). We encourage you to be an early adopter of this new resource and to consider how advising and counseling systems in your schools can be enhanced.
- **KEMTP** (the Kentucky Early Mathematics Testing Program) (www.mathclass.org) offers a free, voluntary diagnostic instrument to help tenth- and eleventh-graders assess their skills in mathematics.
- **Kentucky's GoHigher Web Site** provides information, resources, and interactive tools to guide students through the college planning process. Your students can log on to www.gohigherky.org to create their account, do career assessments, take virtual campus tours, submit financial aid forms, and apply for undergraduate admission. This site also provides resources for counselors. We encourage you to promote accounts on the site for all your students to ensure they take the right courses to prepare them for college and the skilled workplace.
- **GEAR UP Kentucky-II** (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) will serve a new cohort of 6,000 students in 52 schools beginning in the seventh grade and continuing six years. Academic counseling, enrichment programs, and ACT Educational Planning and Assessment System (EPAS) diagnostic assessments for the eighth and tenth grades will help these students to prepare for college enrollment and success. GEAR UP also supports teachers with meaningful intervention strategies. To learn more about GEAR UP Kentucky, log on to the GoHigher Web site (www.gohigherky.org). A map of 2000-05 and 2005-11 GEAR UP schools is enclosed.

- **Kentucky's Statewide Placement Policy**, adopted by the Council on Postsecondary Education in 2004 after extensive work with high school and college math and English teachers, established clear, consistent standards of college-readiness so that students and their parents, teachers, guidance counselors, and others will know exactly what our institutions expect of entering students. Students admitted to Kentucky's public colleges and universities—two-and four-year—and who can demonstrate specific skills in English language arts and mathematics as indicated by statewide threshold scores on the ACT (or SAT equivalents) will be guaranteed placement in college credit-bearing courses. A brochure explaining this policy is included in this mailing.
- **High School Survey of Student Engagement (HSSSE)** is available from the Center for Evaluation and Education Policy at Indiana University. Modeled on the successful survey of college student engagement, this survey is designed to assess the extent to which high school students are involved in activities associated with high levels of learning and development. The results identify student behaviors and school characteristics that can be changed to enhance student learning and school effectiveness. High schools from 28 states participated in 2004 and 2005. Additional information about the HSSSE may be found at: <http://www.indiana.edu/~ceep/hssse/>.